The Plain Man's Guide to the Coronation

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MAIN

Parade of WAR

ONE PENNY

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Down your street now things are happening. Who's on the Coronation Committee?

Well, there's the Smiths; that young Mrs. Elliott, who's something in the Labour Party; then there's George Ware, who used to be secretary of the Factory Cricket Club, and one or two others. No doubt a "lady" has been down the street, too. You remember her from the last elections? She was canvassing for the Tories. When she gets back among her friends in Park Lane she'll tell them, "Oh, yes, I've been doing a bit of slumming—it's all for the cause, you know."

". . . doing a bit of slumming"

Many things have to be seen to. First of all the street decorations. Got to brighten up the old street a bit. Lord knows, it needs it. Makes you feel bad, the look of it, sometimes, when you're crawling back after a couple of hours' overtime, or a hard round of shopping.

Next—the children's party. This is the big day for the grown-ups as well as the kiddies. First the money has to be raised—that means weekly visits down the street—maybe sixpence a week from the neighbours. What do we want? A glass of beer for the older people, plenty of food and a show afterwards for the youngsters. For once, by the way, you'll be able to breathe easy about them playing in the street. Right down at the end there'll be a big board up—"No traffic down this street."

For a bit everyone will put out of their minds all worries about rent day—bread has gone up a penny—Joe's been "stood off" down at the works. On Coronation day, in short, the people down your street will enjoy themselves.

We are for Workers' Happiness

"Aha," you say, "but the Communists are against all this." That, reader, is where you are wrong. We're workers ourselves—and we want our class to have a good time, not just for one day, but always.

We prove that by fighting day in and day out for higher relief and work for the unemployed—for stronger trade unions and higher wages—for peace and against the horrible danger to all of us of another great war. We prove it by working alongside the Labour Party for a Socialist system, such as they have in the U.S.S.R., which is the only guarantee of lasting happiness and advancement for our class.

Oh no! We are not against the street party and the fun on May 12—but we are against the Coronation. We feel it our duty to state our objections, and explain them, even if it means swimming against the stream a little.

Why, then, do we oppose the Coronation? It is because a section of the population always have used and will use these proclamations, Jubilees and Coronations for ends which are against the interests of the workers. Let's see what we mean by this.

What We Mean

First of all, whose day *is* Coronation Day? Who organises and popularises it? Not the workers.

Go down to the Abbey on May 12 and (if you were allowed in) who would you see? All the fine ladies and gentlemen will be there. Decked out in their mink capes and thousands of pounds' worth of jewels; their Admiral's trappings and the gold braid of an " honorary " Colonel's uniform. Stand on the side in the Coronation procession and see them roll by in their coaches and limousines.

Carry a " brickie's " hod? Drive a bus? Or a locomotive? Scrub a floor or cook a meal? Not on your life! These are the people whose usefulness to the community is limited to drawing dividends on their investments. The height of their ambition is to carry the King's pants to him on Coronation morning. What have decent, sober-minded, useful working men got in common with such idiocy? Why, nothing.

This is not your day, reader. This day belongs to the pompous asses of our country—whose dearest pleasure it is (like Goering) to dress in silly uniforms, and strut about peacock-like. This day belongs to the Stuffed Shirts, to the

CORONATION PANTOMIME:

"Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves"

OR

"THE CORONATION MUG"

whole of Europe's ex-Royalty; to our aristocrats, and their hangers-on.

Why ?

Now, too, your daily newspaper is carrying an ever-increasing quantity of news about the Coronation. It all started a long while ago, in little trickles at first; but by Coronation Day—and for a week or two before, the little trickles will have grown to a tremendous torrent—a torrent of propaganda.

A world war threatens—a pit disaster; a million railroad workers demand higher wages. Will your newspapers tell you of these things? No. It will tell of what the King eats; his golf score; the Queen's hat and complexion; exciting stories about the little Princesses; about the troops who will march in the processions, and the decorations. For weeks you won't be able to move without seeing or hearing about the Coronation. Go to the cinema, turn on the wireless, go to church, pick up your newspaper, and more and more you will see or hear nothing but Coronation, *Coronation,* CORONATION.

You know that an ordinary firm (a brewer, or soap manufacturer), would have to pay millions and millions of pounds for such a propaganda campaign.

It is all quite deliberately planned and carried out. For instance, weeks before Princess Marina was married to the Duke of Kent, the newspapers were simply one long torrent of " news " about Marina and the wedding. Just a week before the event, however, there was a very noticeable slackening off in the amount of such material published. The gentlemen of the Press, who have a very shrewd idea of the state of the public mind, had come to the conclusion that the people of Britain were a bit " fed up " about Marina and her wedding. So you see the tap is " turned off " or " turned on " very consciously, there is nothing spontaneous about it at all.

And the object of it all is to induce or " work up " a wave of patriotic feeling.

Patriotism

Now what is the generally accepted definition of Patriot-

ism? The *Daily Express* would say, we believe, somewhat the following:

A patriotic person is one who loves his country, who would defend it from attack, who is proud to be a Britisher, and of the history and great traditions of the British people.

All the papers have been telling you for years that the Communists hate their country, that we are the very reverse of patriotic. Yet we *do* love our country, and we *are* proud of the traditions of the British people.

So we agree with the *Daily Express?* No—we don't! We love our country so much that we should like, for instance, to see the slums cleared away. (Conservative newspapers would all call this very *un*patriotic). We are proud of being British, but we are ashamed of the fact that in September, 1936, over 142,000 people were unemployed in S. Wales (one-third of the insured population).

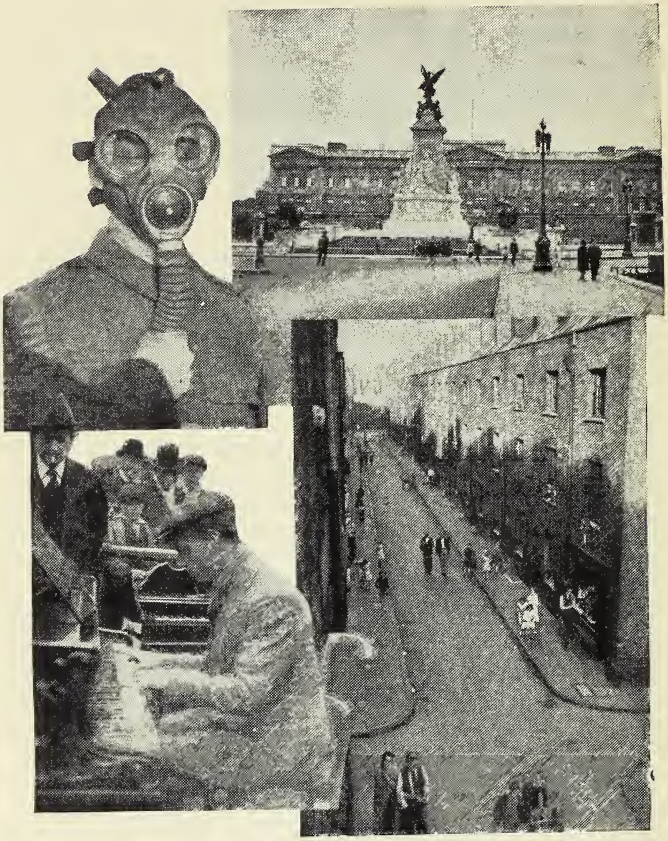
Then again, we should certainly quarrel with the *Daily Express,* as to what part of the traditions and history of the British people we should be proud of. And, indeed, as to which of our ancestors can truthfully be said to represent the British people.

Just for example, our history books are just one long procession of Kings, Barons, Generals and Admirals. But Wat Tyler and John Ball (a priest of Kent) were killed by these self-same Barons because they led a great mass of peasants and farm workers against starvation wages and serfdom (slavery). Who were the real Patriots, those who fought to liberate our ancestors from slavery, or those who were determined to maintain such a state of affairs?

But to these points we shall return later on.

Love of Country

Patriotism means Love of Country. Here let us ask you, reader, one or two questions. How many workers' children ever see their country? Or even grown-up people among workers and the lower middle class? And how can you learn to love your country if you have never seen more of it than a few miles from your own street? And what about all those people who love England so much that (deriving their wealth



WHAT IS THE CONNECTION

between the dancing and jollification in your own street, Buckingham Palace and War? Why this: the few *very* rich people in Britain know that sooner or later they will once again have to betray the workers into fighting to preserve *their* riches and big houses. It is these people who are using the Coronation to persuade us that we are all, rich and poor, "one happy family," and under cover of the festivities speed up their war preparations.

from the labour of British working men), they spend nine months out of twelve in the Swiss Alps, the Riviera, etc? Are these patriots? But oh, my, they'll be very patriotic during Coronation. Some of them you will find in the procession with medals and coronets on, others will be paying £15 for a seat somewhere on the route of the procession—still others will " cash in " on the Coronation and let their flats and " town houses " for colossal rents to American people.

Love Our King

And of course all true Patriots love their King. All our Archbishops, Generals, newspapers, and " captains of industry " couldn't find words wonderful enough to describe the ex-King Edward, until one day they decided he was " unsuitable." And from that day he has absolutely disappeared from the news. All those Bishops and newspapers who loved him so much they were ready to give their lives for him, forgot him like a shot. What a transformation! And now we have a new King and Queen, and they will be, according to the newspapers, the personification of everything that is good. They will love, and respect him, and tell us to do so too, unless . . .

" One Happy Family "

As the Coronation draws nearer, still another feature of " patriotism " will become apparent. Leading articles in the press will begin to say things like this: " the *whole nation* will celebrate on this joyful occasion," or—" *Sectional strife* must not be permitted to mar the holiday spirit which is in the air " —and so on.

Even more. Out and out anti-working class papers like the *Daily Mail* will " discover " what fine fellows working men are. There will be comments on the " brave attempts to brighten squalid streets "; " What good, fine, sturdy, commonsense people the British working class are."

But if (in ordinary times) the metal workers want 2d. more an hour—if factory girls strike against incessant overtime; if railway workers call for a minimum wage of £2 10s. a week with which to keep themselves and families; then what

scoundrels they are; what idiots, to be led astray like sheep through Moscow's agents.

But during the Coronation period, we are all " good boys "—in fact we are all *one big happy family*.

" Look Out "

If someone who in the past has continually fought against you suddenly turns round and calls you " his pal," says " what a good fellow you are," then you immediately turn round and say to yourself, " Hullo—what's he up to? What does he want?"

Now, are we really all " one happy family "?

Do you feel, after you have had your hand cut off working in the factory, and compensation payment is evaded through some technicality in the law, that you are part of " one family "? Do you feel as if your boss was your brother—just after he has cut your wages? Of course not!

But it pays the capitalist and his National Government if they can get you to think along these lines, even for a short time. Why? Simply because they are able (and have done in the past) to take advantage of such a feeling of so-called national unity, to " put one over " on you.

Examples

One or two examples out of the past will show you what we mean by this.

On November 29, 1934, the Duke of Kent married the Greek Princess Marina (incidentally the Duke's income, from the State, was raised at that time from £7,000 per annum to £25,000). We have already referred to the great outcry in the newspapers at that time—propaganda of just the same type that we are seeing so much of now.

And lo and behold! On December 11 (less than a month later), new draft regulations for the administration of Unemployment Assistance were introduced in the House of Commons. By the terms of these regulations it had been intended to save literally millions of pounds a year at the expense of those least able to afford it—the already undernourished unemployed and their children.

As it happens the Government was completely defeated

in its purpose by a great mass revolt of the working class—but can we say that there was no connection between Marina's wedding and this attempt to beat down the unemployed? No—the wedding of these two people was certainly used to bring about that state of patriotic feeling which would make easier an attack on the working class.

The Jubilee

Do you remember the Silver Jubilee celebrations in connection with the late King George's 25th anniversary to the throne? Then, too, the air was full of " national unity " talk. Apparently the *Daily Herald* soon after had a shrewd suspicion of what it was all about, for on May 21, 1935, their leader column read as follows:

> " Mr. Bevin expressed the hope yesterday that the next election will be fought rationally, and on differences in policy . . .
>
> " It is suggested, for example, that the Jubilee celebrations could be utilised as an electoral advantage for the Government."

Of course it was so used. In fact the whole-hearted support given to Princess Marina's wedding, the Jubilee celebration, etc., by the leadership of the Labour Movement, were one of the decisive factors which won the last General Election for the Tories. And there is plenty of talk going about now that this Government, which has done more to starve the unemployed and drag the world to war than any other, is going to take advantage of the Coronation to call another General Election.

" The Services "

There is plenty of evidence to show also that the glamorous and attractive military parades which are the chief features of these celebrations are very shrewdly used by the Generals to bamboozle young working class lads to join one of the Services.

For instance, during Jubilee year the War Office brought out a special poster, entitled " Join the Army during Jubilee Year." Again, let's read this little cutting from the *Daily Telegraph* of May 31, which appeared under the heading:

" Bringing the Navy to London River." It reads as follows: " . . . but in connection with the Jubilee celebrations London is to be made aware of sea power . . . The Nelson and the Rodney will be there." Or again, from the Press: " On June 29 a Royal Air Force ' Jubilee ' display was held."

In connection with the Proclamation which marked the accession to the throne of the ex-King Edward, a great military review was held in Hyde Park. Great grandstands were erected and charges for admission made. Big, husky Guardsmen " performed " as programme sellers.

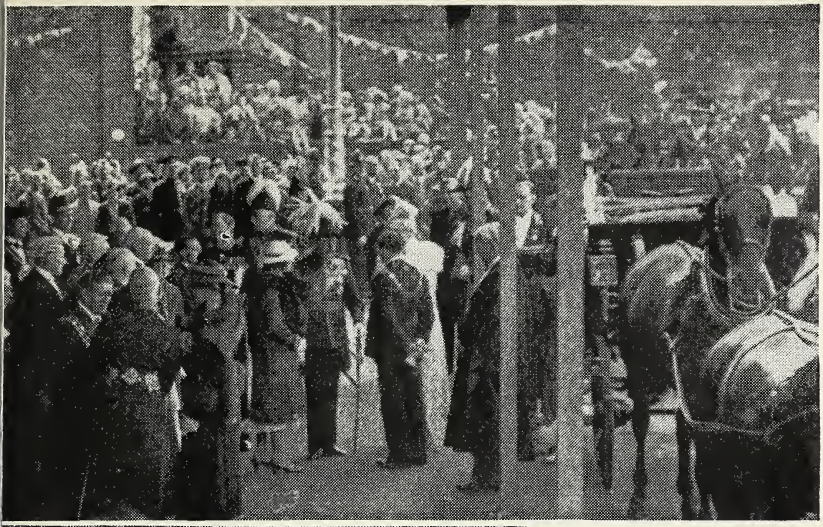
The occasion of Lord Mayor's Day on November 9th was used to stage another military procession. It was very interesting to scan the Press round this period. Commanding officers of the Territorial Units in London requested very vigorously that a place be made for the " Terriers " on the route. They understand very well the use of all such affairs.

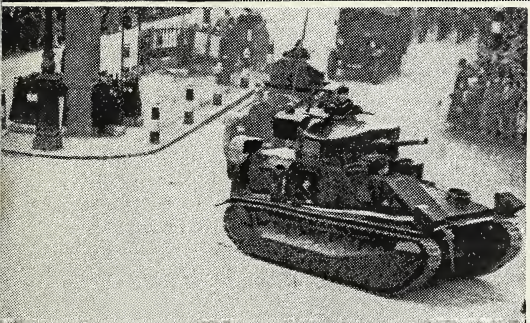
In other words, behind all the pomp and glitter, all the fine words about " splendid opportunity to show our devotion to the monarchy," etc., etc., lies the deadly serious aim of the Generals and the National Government to build up the Army, Navy and Air Force. Jubilees, Proclamations, Royal births, weddings and deaths are all in reality utilised as gigantic " Recruiting Sergeants "—boosts for the " Services." And remember, it is *your* son, working-class reader, that they are after.

And To-day?

It is no accident that the National Government is embarking on the biggest expenditure on armaments known in British history in Coronation year. Altogether in the next five years it is estimated that the staggering sum of £1,500,000,000 will be used up on guns, tanks, planes, battleships, etc. Mr. Duff Cooper, the War Minister, goes about the country shouting conscription threats. More tanks and battleships mean the necessity for more men to man them.

And already the " profiteers " are rubbing their hands in glee. Immediately after the pronouncement concerning the four hundred million pounds Armaments loan, shares in all the armament concerns leapt up. Those holding Aircraft shares





Above, Labour Mayors of the East End of London joining in the Jubilee celebrations. The Mayor of Bermondsey, to his credit, refused to have anything to do with the celebrations.

Left, How the Lord Mayor of London celebrates his own Show—with Tanks!

in particular have already reaped a rich harvest from the Armaments policy of the National Government.

For "Defence"?

What are these tremendous armaments for? Why the call for a huge standing army? Who have we to fight? Who is the enemy? To all these questions the Government blandly answers that this "military preparedness" is for defence, and that a big British Army means Peace.

Nonsense! Huge armaments have never staved off a war —rather have they always precipitated wars. This Government is not interested in defending the people, or it would feed the millions of undernourished children in this country.

This Government has done more to wreck the League of Nations (remember China and Abyssinia) than any other in the world. Furthermore, through its open support of Nazi Germany, Japan, Fascist Italy, and the Fascist Franco in Spain, it has clearly proved that armaments entrusted to it will be used not in defence of peace and democracy, but rather for the assistance of aggression and reaction everywhere in the world.

That is why we stand for *working-class unity* to turn out the National Government and put in a Labour Government which, with the backing of all who are against war, will carry out a real peace policy. This means collective security—an agreement for mutual aid between Britain, France and the Soviet Union, which will check the war plans of Hitler and Mussolini.

Our Objections Summarised

Let us at this stage summarise our objections to the Coronation. The Coronation celebration is used to engender a false feeling of National Unity. Under cover of this "get together" atmosphere the capitalists take steps which are against the interests of the working class—against Peace and Democracy. Further, these celebrations ask us to endorse, respect and revere all that is bad in the past history and traditions of the British people.

We think these are reasoned, justified objections, and are confident that you will agree with us.

The Real Traditions

The British people have traditions, real and splendid traditions of the fight against oppression both from abroad and from domestic would-be tyrants.

Centuries ago our ancestors rose against the tyrant King John. By force of arms, they compelled him to sign the Magna Charta, which provided for the great principle of " trial by equal."

Hundreds of years later three Protestant Bishops, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, were burned at the stake. They led the fight for religious freedom against the then established Church of Rome. Said Latimer at the stake:

" Play the man, Master Ridley, and we shall this day light such a candle in England as I trust never shall be put out."

In the middle of the 17th century John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell successfully fought against a corrupt Monarchy and the slogan " the Divine Right of Kings." Charles I. was executed, and the principle of immediate trial after arrest was secured.

The Fight for Trade Unionism and the Vote

Since the period beginning roughly with the year 1800 we have witnessed in this country a continual, uninterrupted struggle for the right to organise into trade unions, and for the extension of Parliamentary Democracy.

In 1799 the Combination Laws were passed, which made membership in a Trade Union a crime. But in 1824 the mass pressure of the working class compelled the repealing of these laws.

Again, some years later, in 1834, there took place the famous Tolpuddle prosecutions. James and George Loveless, the Standfields, James Hammett and James Brine, from the little village of Tolpuddle, Dorset, were sentenced to transportation, exile from their families and native land, for attempting to organise a trade union of the sorely oppressed agricultural workers.

When we think of the Chartist movement, we think of Wm. Lovett, a London carpenter, Bronterre O'Brien and James Morrison.

Within our own time countless names leap to mind. Suffice it to mention Sylvia Pankhurst and the dauntless courage of the women's suffrage movement which she led; A. J. Cook, revered leader of the British mineworkers; our own Tom Mann, a household name for all.

Nor can we forget those who have gone out to Spain to help in the defence of democracy and peace against the attack of international fascism. Many of these have laid down their lives to save not only Spain, but Britain, too, from the barbarous crimes of Hitler and Mussolini.

These are Our Heroes

And it is in the course of this age-long fight that our Heroes, our Martyrs, fought, suffered and in many cases died. It is to them that we owe homage and respect. For it is their sacrifices that have made possible all the liberties which we enjoy to-day.

We in our generation have to take hold of the torch that has been handed down to us. You, reader, must look about you, examine again your own position, determine anew to fight against the poverty and oppression of our own times.

Unity of the Working Class and the People

Have we not our poverty to-day? Look at the thousands of young people working in the factories at an age when they should still be at school, and being driven and sweated, worked for long hours for low wages. Look at the hideous inquisition which is the Means Test. At the hundreds of thousands of people, even millions, who live in dwellings that are scores of years old, damp, insanitary and overcrowded. Look at the cotton workers of Lancashire, the miners of Great Britain who are daily risking their lives, in arduous toil, for the princely wage of £2 per week. And then ask yourself. Is not, in these circumstances, the pomp and glitter, the vulgar show of wealth associated with the Coronation an affront to the people?

On the occasion of the Jubilee the Labour leaders joined hands with the Tories, with results that we have already

described. What is necessary to-day is Unity of the working class. Unity between the Communist Party, the Labour Party and all other working-class Parties in a common fight against Poverty, against the Means Test, low wages. What is needed is unity of the whole people against the National Government if we are to maintain Peace and Freedom against the very real threats of a new World War and Fascist oppression at home.

Our Own Day

And if we have our own heroes and our own traditions, we also have our working-class day of celebration. *May Day is Our Day.* On this day for years past now the people of England and of the whole world have demonstrated their firm determination to carry forward the torch of liberty. May Day is the day when the common people assert their right to progress in colourful processions and meetings. Processions which embody in them the will, the strivings and the aspirations of all who long for a truly just state of affairs.

On Coronation Day you, reader, your friends, family and neighbours will enjoy yourselves. And once again we Communists say " Of course! Our lives are not so happy that we can afford to ignore any opportunity for a good time."

But let us be sure that Coronation Day is not successfully used to deal a blow at our Labour Movement, to forward by one inch the National Government's war plans.

And let us, by turning out on May Day with our flags, banners and bands, ensure that our celebration, May Day, is every whit as colourful, as large and impressive as the Coronation.

And in this way we shall be paying homage to all that is best in our history, dealing to-day a blow against all the forces making for war and repression, and helping ourselves forward along the road to Socialism.

JOIN THE

Communist Party

OF GREAT BRITAIN

Join the Fight
FOR PEACE
BREAD AND
SECURITY

Tear off and fill up TO-DAY

I wish to become a Member of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

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Address .....

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Fill in this form and send to C.P.G.B., 16, King Street, London, W.C.1, or to Local Organiser.

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World communism in the 20th
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This is number one

of the series "The Plain Man's Guide to the Coronation." Make sure you get the two others.

Number two is called "One Happy Family." It gives a careful estimate of all the money to be spent on the celebrations and then shows what WE could do with the money.

Number three is entitled "How is the Empire?" It tells the story of what is going on in the British Colonies and the Dominions. The story of the hundreds of million people who will *not* be in London for the Coronation.

Fully illustrated with drawings and photographs, price one penny, and worth sixpence!

Supplies of these pamphlets can be obtained from the Workers' Bookshop, 49 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.1. Single copies, 1½d. post free; quantities, post free, 11½d. for 12, 7s. for 100.

If you have agreed with this pamphlet you should take the

DAILY WORKER

regularly—the only daily paper that gives working-class news and views about the Coronation and all other events.

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